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No. 1

## GIFT OF GREEK VASES

Mr. Martin A. Ryerson has presented thirteen Greek vases and a Roman lamp to the Museum. These objects have been placed on exhibition in Room 15, Case 40. Mr. Ryerson purchased this series of vases, with others that remain in his private collection, principally at the dispersal of M. van Branteghem's remarkable cabinet of Greek antiquities by auction sale at Paris in 1892.

Three of these vases are reproduced in our illustrations :

1. White lekythos. Height 12 ½ inches. Brown line drawing with flecks of black and red. A youth with hat, chlamys and javelin addresses an old man in a red cloak. Fine IV century Athenian work. From Athens.



No. 3

inscription, written checkrower-fashion (στοιχηδόν), reads

E V A I Ω N

K Α Λ Ο Σ

*Evaion is handsome.* Early IV century work. Found at Athens.

3. White lekythos. Height 19 inches. Polychrome figures of fine V or IV century Athenian style. A youth and a young woman with gifts face a tombstone at center before which a bearded man with a javelin is seated.

No. 3, above, was published Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition, 1888, and *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1899, p. 180. Mr.



No. 2

No. 2. White oil flask (lekythos.) Height 12 ½ inches. Black line drawing. Young woman with fillets. Beside her a chair and a work-basket. The

Arthur Fairbanks, of the Boston Museum, has called our attention to White Athenian Vases, British Museum, Plates XXVI B and V, and to Burlington Club Exhibition 1888, No. 122, as the only closely allied specimens that have been published. The picture on the present lekythos presents three singularities. The old man's hair and beard are painted in small gray patches. His body and limbs are rudely outlined by *enlavage* on the red ground of his cloak. Those parts of the young man's chlamys which hang before are uncolored, while those which hang behind are painted pale red. We are led to suspect the interposition of an indiscreet restorer. In Fröhner's catalogue of the Van Branteghem Collection the vase is No. 181.

No. 2, above, is No. 172 of the same catalogue. It has been published by Klein, *Lieblingsnamen*, p. 70. No. 1 is identical with Fröhner, Collection Van Branteghem, 197.

The influence of contemporary mural painting on the vase painters is easily discerned, especially perhaps in the large, facile drawing of faces and hands. These miniature figure subjects were thought in life size by ceramic artists of charming talent, who had a rich museum of V and IV century Greek sculpture almost at the door of their workshop, in the Ceramicus cemetery. There were three fine public galleries of mural and panel paintings fifteen minutes further away, to say nothing of the artists' studies from studio models and from life.

Two of the foregoing subjects allow us to gather that the flasks were often manufactured with direct reference to their use as tributes to the departed. A much-quoted line in one of Aristophanes' comedies alludes to a ceramic artist "who figure-paints the oil flasks for the dead." (*Ar. Eccl.* v. 996.)

M. Van Branteghem devoted ten years of aggressive collecting to the assemblage of an exquisite cabinet of antiquities from about 1876 to 1886, and has helped to form other Brussels collections both public and private. He is highly esteemed in London, Paris and Germany as Belgium's most scholarly connoisseur in classical antiquities.

In addition to the three lekythoi just described, Case 40, Room 15, contains nine Greek vases, one Greek lamp, and one Roman lamp presented by Mr. Ryerson. The last is of gritty buff terracotta, and has a broken handle. A standing Victory of harsh modelling is moulded in low relief on the closed concave top of the lamp. The goddess holds a palm frond in her right hand. Her left rests on a small round shield, upon which are the scarcely legible lines in relief lettering:

ANNO NOVVM FAV STVM FE LICEM MI HI,  
i. e., *Annum novum faustum felicem mihi* (*agas.*). This, being interpreted, is "Wishing you a happy New Year." The reading is Fröhner's.

In the field are three fruits, a string of dried figs, and three medals. These objects, with the lamp, represent the sort of presents that were commonly made to a friend or patron on New Year's Day. On the medals of the relief we distinguish a head of Janus, a Victory and the Augustan symbol of two joined hands holding a caduceus. The engraver's idea may have been to represent the first bronze, silver and gold coinages of Rome. The cast bronze *as* of early republican times, with the head of Janus on its obverse was large enough to justify the relative size of the medals as represented on the little relief. Our lamp is described by Fröhner, *La Collection Eugène Piot*, at the auction sale of which Mr. Ryerson bought it, Paris, 1890.